

"NOT MARBLE NOR THE GILDED MONUMENTS": THE POET'S VAUNT OF IMMORTALITY

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Among Archibald MacLeish's many brilliant shorter poems the 32-line lyric entitled "Not Marble Nor the Gilded Monuments" deserves its high popularity. Beginning with this bitter quatrain,

The praisers of women in their proud and beautiful poems,
Naming the grave mouth and the hair and the eyes,
Boasted those they loved should be forever remembered:
These were lies,

the lover acknowledges sadly that the incomparable beauty of his sweetheart cannot persist and that not even "with difficult labor" can he "prevail on the hearts of unborn men to remember" it. Yet a paradoxical *volte face* blazes in his final lines (with a heart-stirring shift to "eternal present" tense as signal for the dramatic shift to irrational affirmation) :

I will not speak of the famous beauty of women:
I will say the shape of a leaf lay once on your hair.
Till the world ends and the eyes are out and the mouths broken
Look! It is there !

A powerful lyric--but some readers query why MacLeish put his quaint title into quotation-form. Perhaps a handy footnote informs them that Shakespeare's notable Sonnet LV is the poem to which MacLeish is paying wry tribute by quoting its first line as his title: the Elizabethan poet's boast that his "powerfull rime" praising his beloved's beauty will outlive "death and all oblivious enmity."¹ The footnote may further reveal that Shake-

spere's sonnet in turn echoes the great ode, *Exegi Monumentum*, of the Roman poet Horace, composed 1600 years before Queen Elizabeth's reign and almost two millenia before our modern American poet's unique handling of this hardy motif.²

"There are but two strong conquerors of the forgetfulness of men, Poetry and Architecture," wrote John Ruskin; and poets for twenty-five centuries or more have insisted that³ "not marble nor the gilded monuments" shall outlive their seemingly perishable words on papyrus, parchment, or paper. During our last three increasingly chaotic and fast-paced centuries few poets have had MacLeish's temerity to incorporate within their poems boasts of future fame; yet earlier authors were bolder or more ingenuous: a brilliant succession of lyrics ranging from Pindar to Shakespeare enshrine their composers' proud prophecies that either they or the objects of their eulogies will be assured timeless fame through the imperishable lines they have penned. This "poetic vaunt of immortality" (as Sidney Lee terms it⁴) developed into a convention-most glitteringly exhibited in Shakespeare's sonnets of 1600-the earlier history of which the present paper proposes to trace by means of a representative corpus of passages from the works of Pindar, Sappho, Ennius, Catullus, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Propertius, Martial, Dante, Petrarch, Ronsard, du Bellay, Desportes, several English sonneteers, and their master, Shakespeare. This should provide a rough idea of the background which the Elizabethans possessed insofar as our particular convention is concerned; and some observations on the measure of originality, art, and sincerity displayed in the use of the "eternizing conceit" by Shakespeare and his contemporaries will then be in order.⁵

Greek admirers of the Homeric epics were not slow to recognize how definitely the heroes of Greece and Troy were immortalized in the Iliad and the Odyssey. The astute Pindar,⁶ when he pours forth several strophes beginning

But I deem that Odysseus inherits renown
Far, far surpassing his sufferings,
Through the sweet-voiced lay that Homer sings,

shows his awareness of this power of the Muse; indeed, he might be the earliest and most famous professional "eternizer," making no bones of the fact that his Muse,

for silver fee
Didst covenant to uplift thy voice in singing.

In one after another of his odes composed to be chanted in honor of Olympian Games athletes, Pindar inserted what might vulgarly be called "plugs" for his art:

But when by toil one winneth victory,
The singer's honey-throated lays
Uprising, plant for fame that yet shall be
A sure foundation. ⁸

For shrouded in gloom of oblivion's night
Are mighty deeds that be left unsung.
One mirror alone do we know that hath flung
Their reflection afar to endure for long,
If by grace of the Lady of Memory
Of the shining coronal, these may see
Their requital for toils in ringing song. ⁹

But alas! it sleepeth, the olden glory,
And mortals forget the heroic story
Save only that which attains unto poesy's perfect flower
By reason that it hath been wedded to far-ringing streams of song. ¹⁰

Using again the example of Homer's praise, Pindar kept in the foreground the desirability of deserved fame through his own odes:

So Nestor and Lycian Sarpedon in lays
Ringing loud on the lips of men, have praise,
Whom we see as it were in temples enshrined
Up-piled by the master-builders of song;
For through glorious strains liveth chivalry long--
But the path unto that fame few may find. ¹¹

Frequently Pindar reminded the clients for his eulogies of their good fortune in having contracted for a commemorative poem:

O happy thou, that after labour sore
Thou hast the praise of noblest song
To keep thy memory green!¹²

Using a "gilded monument" analogy which we shall see echoed two thousand years later, Pindar yet again emphasized the eternizing power of his lines:

A pillar more than Parian marble splendid-
As gold when the refiner's work is ended
Shows all its brightness forth, so by the lay
That chants great deeds in war or athlete-play
A man is raised to heights of bliss excelling
The pomp of kings...¹³

And, finally, we find him in a more acidly personal vein, deriding his competitors who use another immortalizing medium:

No carver of statues am I, to fashion images moveless abiding
Dumb on the pedestals where men set them! Nay, sweet song of mine,
Forth do thou fare from Aegina's haven, on every tall ship riding.¹⁴

Pindar, then, may be said to pioneer in the art of eternizing; his tone and imagery definitely affected not only his successors in the Latin tongue, but those of Renaissance Europe as well.¹⁵

Even from a couple of the fragments of lines attributed to early Greek lyric poets, evidence of the "vaunt of immortality" may be gleaned, although the topic is not common. A line from Sappho asserts briefly,

I say that even hereafter men will remember me.¹⁶

And indeed they do! Also Simonides, in lauding those who died at Thermopylae, illustrates his theme with poignant imagery:

For mourning they have remembrance, for lamentation
praise. And such a winding-sheet neither decay nor
all-conquering time shall make dim.¹⁷

That unique early link between Greek and Roman literature, the Grecian poet Ennius who wrote in Latin, has left a couplet quoted by Cicero which shows us that from the beginning Roman

writers--generally more self-conscious than the Greeks--adopted the eternizing motif:

Let no one honour me with tears or on my ashes weep.
For why? from lips to lips of men I pass and living keep.¹⁸

Among earlier Roman writers, the poems of Catullus yield no mean harvest along this line. Some passages are rather threats of undying infamy than promises of fame!

Yet this is certain, you
Shall not escape disaster--
Men will recite your name, your crimes shall be a legend
To countless generations.¹⁹

Again, Catullus threatens his enemy with his "terrible iambs":

And be my rival, take your punishment,
that's sure to follow you
many long years.²⁰

Sometimes his imprecations are more gay than savage:

I warn you now, three hundred
hendecasyllables shall follow you forever,
or, give me back my napkin.²¹

And at least once Catullus in all seriousness made the immortalizing convention his central theme:

O goddesses of poetry, hear me now, nothing can check my flow of
words to tell you how
Allius served me. By these lines I shall preserve his name, defying
the swift course of time against the darkest
night where the years fall forgotten. Here is the story of his
kindness, hardihood,
that you must tell again, recite his deeds to thousands, and make
these words live, written
for posterity, and stand indelible upon an ancient scroll...
And may his fame grow large and larger, magnified by death, nor
shall time, the spider, weave
a slow veil over the forgotten name of Allius, a signature in bronze...
So let these verses be my gift to you, Allius, and time shall never
cover your name with rust...²²

A later but more weighty and renowned poet, Virgil, did not disdain to employ occasionally the "vaunt of immortality":

And yet hereafter will I gird myself to sing the fiery fights
of Caesar, and to bear the great name of Caesar through as many
years as he is distant from his first origin from Tithonus.

Less artistically objective than his master, Homer, Virgil could pause even in the course of his epic narrative, after a particularly vigorous account of the death in battle of Euryalus and Ninus, to "pindarize" his heroes:

Happy pair ! If aught my verse avail, no day shall ever blot you
from the memory of time, so long as the house of Aeneas shall
dwell on the Capitol's unshaken rock, and the Father of Rome hold
sovereign sway!²⁴

The Roman poet who is perhaps most famous, however, for his vaunts in the vein of Pindar--the one whom later French and English poets most obviously imitated in this respect--was Horace. In his earliest ode, the convention was employed somewhat tentatively:

Give me the poet's wreath of ivy--then
One with the gods am I...
But if you set me in the lyric choir
I shall lift up my head and strike the stars.²⁵

But in a later ode he is boldly imaginative in respect to the eternal fame of the emperor lauded in his eulogy:

Where
Shall I be heard rehearsing how to bear
Up to heav'n's stars and Jove's high board
Th' eternal praise of Caesar, peerless lord?²⁶

Again, metaphorically emulating Pindar, he demands immortality for the achievements of Lollius:

You shall not run
Your race unhonoured and unsung by me,
Dear Lollius, and nought that you have done,
If I can aid, devoured by envy's tooth,
Shall pass from memory.²⁷

However, the most seminal of all Horace's passages on this theme, the one imitated most often in Renaissance France and

England, is the first part of the *Exegi Monumentum* ode:

My monument is wrought, outlasting brass,
Outsoaring pyramids, the work of kings,
Which rain may not devour nor hurricane's
Wild rage destroy, nor all the marching years
Innumerable, nor any lapse of time.
I shall not wholly perish: much of me
Will 'scape the grave: I shall live on to reap
Fresh praise in ages new.²⁸

Shakespeare's sonnets XVIII, LV, and LXXXI are only the most famous among many lyric passages in the Renaissance echoing the Roman poet's boast concerning his "monument." But even the negative phrasing employed by Shakespeare--"Not marbles..." is anticipated by another Horatian ode, translated as follows:

Not marbles graved with fame for all to read,
Which give to good and gallant chiefs a new
Life after death, illuminate valiant deeds
More than the Muses of Calabria.²⁹

Sharing honors with the *Exegi Monumentum* are the lines which bring to a triumphant close the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, a passage best reproduced in Golding's translation so wellknown in Elizabethan times:

Now have I brought a work to end which neither Jove's fierce wrath
Nor sword nor fire nor fretting age, with all the force it hath,
Are able to abolish quite...And all the world shall never
Be able for to quench my name...And time without all end.....
My life shall everlastingly be lengthened still by fame.³⁰

Ovid, indeed, reverted to this convention in several others of his works, developing it both in reference to himself and to the fame of those whom he praised--for example:

My books are a greater and more enduring memorial. These I have sure trust, although they have injured him, will give a name and a long enduring life to their author.³¹

It is the living that Envy feeds upon; after doom it stirs no more, when each man's fame guards him as he deserves. I, too, when the final fires have eaten up my frame, shall still live on, and the great part of me survive my death.³²

Verse heralds your praises and sees to it that the story of your

deeds falls not to the ground. By verse virtue lives on and, avoiding the tomb, becomes known to late posterity.³³

And finally, for almost the first time in these citations, the "eter-nizing conceit" in its narrower and more romantic form--so centrally exploited in the Renaissance--makes its appearance with Ovid:

My dower, too, it is to glorify the deserving fair by song; who-ever I have willed is made famous by my art. Gowns will be rent to rags, and gold be broke to fragments; the glory my songs shall give will last forever.³⁴

Among other Roman poets who expressed themselves as secure of immortality through their verse, Propertius in a memorial to Troy harks back characteristically to the blind epicist:

Nay, even Homer, that told thy fall, hath seen his work grow in fame through lapse of after-years. Me, too, shall Rome praise in the voices of late-born generations; myself I foresee that day beyond the fatal pyre.³⁵

Compensation for envy (a subtheme already noted in a Horatian passage *supra*), Propertius similarly promises himself;

But that whereof the envious throng have robbed me in life, Glory after death shall repay with double interest.³⁶

And finally, in a long and stirring section of one poem, our author aspires to be a contributor to the immortality even of his native city:

Let him that sees the towers of Asis climbing from the vale reckon the glory of its walls by the fame of my wit! Rome, smile on me!³⁷

From the epigrams of Martial, also, the immortalizing convention is occasionally reflected:

But there is given thee a name that shall live in deathless song.³⁸

However, the expected acidly satiric quality seeps into other such expressions by Martial, flavored with his peculiar genius:

More truly in my song will my face be seen; this my song, which no chances, no lapse of years, can efface, shall live when the work of Apelles shall perish.³⁹

Now nothing more can Fame give me; my book is thumbed everywhere; and when Messala's pavements shall lie shivered by decay, and Ticinus' towering marble shall be dust, yet me shall lips read, and many a sojourner shall carry my poems with him to his fatherland.⁴⁰

Perhaps these two-score quotations from nine or ten classical poets provide a fair cross-section of the origin and early adaptations of the "poetic vaunt of immortality." That this convention originated in a "professional" context; that its users referred chiefly to themselves as immortal, often to their patrons or the heroes of their eulogies--seldom to a woman whose praises they might be singing; that the eternizing passages generally were inserted in poems toward the beginning or end of a given work; and that a corpus of imagery involving monuments, temples, treasures, green laurels, gold, statues, and shrouds comes into use: such are some observations to be drawn from this survey of the classical background of the eternizing conceit. What developments intervene before Elizabethan sonneteers exploited this conceit romantically may be illustrated by brief excursions into Italian and French poetry.

Dante's *Divine Comedy* may be regarded from one viewpoint as a gargantuan immortalization of Beatrice, of course; but interestingly enough the "sonnets" incorporated into Dante's *La Vita Nuova* show no vestige of the eternizing conceit *per se*, unless the final lines from one addressed to pilgrims who have not heard of Beatrice's death may be so interpreted:

If, through your will to hear, awhile ye stay,
Truly my heart with sighs declares to me
That ye shall afterwards depart in tears.
Alas ! her Beatrice now lost hath she;
And all the words that one of her may say
Have virtue to make weep whoever hears.⁴¹

Whereas Petrarch's *Canzoniere* are universally recognized as the Italian fourteenth-century source, or at least the "popularizer," of most conventions, themes, and conceits used in French and English sonnetry, yet it is the classical Greek and Roman origin of the "vaunt of immortality" motif--its dependence upon Pindar, Horace, and Ovid--which has been stressed by some literary historians without significant reference to Petrarch either as channel or as progenitor of elements of "eternization."⁴²

A glance at Petrarch's sonnets, nevertheless, shows that in certain respects Petrarch—whether or not his own inspiration was classical or partly original, whether or not his use of the device materially influenced his French and English imitators—did extensively employ the “vaunt of immortality” with diction and symbols often not slavishly imitative of classic poets.

A survey of the 317 Petrarchan sonnets (excluding the material of the canzones, sestinas, etc.) indicates that around eighteen passages present one phase or another of the eternizing concept. Its first occurrence is not in reference to Laura, but in a tribute to his friend and patron, Pandolfo Malatesta, Lord of Rimini:

my spirit into song must leap
To deck with praise the mighty name you bear:
For proudest marble never can declare
More than the flesh that withers in a sleep.
Think you Marcellus or the purple name
Of Caesar, Paulus, Scipio spring to flame
By anvil's heat or hammer's nervous thrust?
No, my Pandolfo, stone dissolves in dust:
Only the poet's pure immortal plan
Outwits the swift mortality of man.⁴³

Over one hundred sonnets occur before Petrarch attempts the following tribute—which is geographical rather than temporal in extension:

If your name's praise
Could reach, I should fill Bactra and bless Thule,
Nile, Tanais, Calpe, and Olympus duly;
But since I cannot set the four wide ways
Of the world on fire, that land shall hear and shine,
Locked by the Alp, split by the Apennine.⁴⁴

Later, Petrarch asserts that if Homer and Virgil had seen Laura, then, neglecting their own lauded heroes,

They would have merged melodious and bold
Into one singing strength and so compelled
The plaudits of eternity⁴⁵

as Petrarch himself wished, he says, to do for Laura. In the next sonnet, however, the poet is dubious of his ability at eternizing:

But Ah! beyond oblivion and the gloom

Of dusty death shall that adorable head
Of gold go down to sleep ungarlanded
Save of the few faint roses I presume
To weave upon her ?Homer and Orpheus,
Mantua's shepherd poet should proclaim
The beauty that were wind and fire and flame
To stretch their souls! Alas, that unto us
By unpropitious stars the task is given
Whose cloud of praises must affront her heaven.⁴⁶

In more confident mood Petrarch chides his sweet "infidel" who will not believe what "all the world credits":

And still this flame which merits scarce a nod,
And these your praises poured through every song,
May in a thousand breasts unborn prolong
Your beauty and my breath: the Voice of God
Proclaims, though dust stop bright eye and brave tongue,
Both Love and Death shall go the starrier shod!⁴⁷

He gains ironic comfort by imagining the envy of posterity:

Haply hereafter envious youth shall sigh:
"For sake of that superlative loveliness
The bard has burned enough!" While some may cry:
"Ah, why, most iron Fortune, answer why
Could not these cheated eyes that dream possess ?
Why was she born so early, I so late?"⁴⁸

Whatever his lady's hardness of heart, the poet's aim is steadfast:

But always I shall sing her, every hour,
So that when I have passed the ghostly gate,
The world may know I wore death like a flower.⁴⁹

The majority of the eternizing passages in Petrarch's sonnets occur, curiously enough, in the smaller group written after Laura's death. One reaction, as the heartbroken poet reviewed his years of unrequited fidelity, is his perception of a reciprocal benefit from the long sparring contest:

I press gratitude
Upon her that with her so sweet disdain
She curbed my blood and checked the mortal feud.
O delicate dear maneuver ! O rich gain !
I with my verse, she with her eyes obtain
Glory in her as she in me high good.⁵⁰

Within the next score of sonnets occur a good half dozen chiefly or entirely devoted to a varied rehearsal of efforts to eternize on earth his Laura now immortal in heaven. Again some of them reveal his sense of inadequacy for the task :

Ah, had I ever thought the world would care
To hear my sorrows and my hopes rehearse,
I should have wrought more cunning in my verse
Under the dark compulsion of despair.
Dead is my Muse who by a golden hair
Strangles the soul of song and weaves a curse
On my proud power as on my universe,
Choking the words that would my grief declare.
And, of a truth, my overwhelming aim
Was only, Heaven knows how, to give full vent
To my sick heart and not to flatter fame:
And could I now obtain the sweet content
Of earthly approbation, it were tame--
She calls me to a richer sacrament! ⁵¹

He is appalled at his own temerity, for to chant Laura's praises now involves fumbling with the supernatural:

I dared to think my wings could proudly sweep--
Not through my power but through omnipotent grace--
Stirruped with music to the golden place
Where Love and Death their double bastions keep.
I flounder now: I cannot make that leap,
That glittering arc through soaring silver space--
"Who swoops too far may fall upon his face,"
I said, "The barricades of Heaven are steep."
That height the scope of genius cannot span,
How much the less my heavy gait and tongue:
For Nature in her stood Olympian.
Love followed Nature and such flags outflung
Declaring her divinity, never man
Might even look--yet I have looked--and sung! ⁵²

Yet Petrarch intends to continue eternizing her, however feebly:

That soft demeanor, that rare modest speech
Moving from lofty places, that sweet flame
Which tore my heart, still tears, and will again--
All gone; yet if her road exceeds my reach,
I hope her name, her lovely gentle name,
To consecrate with this inadequate pen. ⁵³

Though I have yearned to paint her and to make
Her beauty known and deathless--and still yearn--
So that like me posterity may burn,
Her sweet face still eludes--the phrases ache.⁵⁴

In another sonnet Petrarch's purpose is crystal-clear:

O lovely lady, brief the sleep you slumbered:
An instant only, then amid the numbered,
You woke to gaze with them on God's deep glory:
And if my verse its cunning still recovers,
Among the noble minds, the noble lovers
It shall record your name, your deathless story.⁵⁵

And almost the final sonnet embodies Petrarch's concern that his eternizing verses be worthy of their lovely object in heaven:

Ah Love, assist my faint and foolish brain !
Pillar the style, sustain the lyric portal !
Help me to sing of her who is immortal,
A citizen of the celestial reign!
Permit, Lord, that my verses may attain
The reach of her proud praise (presumptuous mortal?)
Whose passing our poor world must now deplore till
The Golden Trumpet give her back again.⁵⁶

Petrarch, then we may conclude, is not backward in explicitness concerning what after all is the implicit aim of all romantic sonnet sequences: the eternizing of the beloved. As did the classic poets, Petrarch writes of posterity's reaction to his verses, of the mutability of marble as compared with poetry, and of Homer and Virgil as earlier masters of the eternizing concept; unlike the classic poets, Petrarch appears, with every evidence of sincerity, to doubt his power adequately to immortalize his beloved as she deserves. It is true that much of his verse devoted to this concept revolves about a woman already dead, and hence it did not lend itself easily to imitation by French or English poets; however, it seems manifest that Petrarch ranks not far behind Pindar, Horace, and Ovid as a germinating center of the eternizing conceit--particularly in its application to a beloved woman and its acclimatization to the sonnet.

Among the Pleiade sonneteers in sixteenth-century France, their leader, Pierre Ronsard, was a particularly persistent and grandiloquent adept in the employment of the "vauntofimmortality." He said of himself,

Si dès mon enfance
Le premier en France
J'ai Pindarisé,⁵⁷

and he made almost a profession of addressing immortalizing sonnets or odes to noble patrons as well as his several ladies; but he was most happy when (to adapt a Whitmanesque phrase) he was celebrating and assuming himself. In one stirring ode, for instance, he follows more or less Horace's *exegi monumentum*:

plur dur que fer j'ay fini mon ouvrage,
Que l'an, dispos á demener les pas,
Que l'eau, le vent ou le brulant orage,
L'injuriant, ne ru'ront point á bas.
Quand ce viendra que le dernier trespas
M'assoupjira d'un somme dur, á l'heure,
Sous le tombeau tout Ronsard n'ira pas,
Restant de luy la part meilleure.
Tousjours, tousjours san que jamais je meure,
Je voleray tout vif par l'univers,
Eternisant les champs ou je demeure,
De mes lauriers fatalement couvers,
Pour avoir joint les deux harpeurs divers
Au doux babil de ma lyre d'yvoire,
Que j'ay rendus Vaudomois par mes vers.
Sus dunque, Muse, emporte au ciel la gloire
Que j'ay gagnée, annoncant la victoire
Dont a bon droit je me voy jouissant,
Et de son fils consacre la memoire,
Serrant son front d'un laurier verdissant.⁵⁸

A superb boast, this, employing all the by-now-standard imagery of monuments, escape from the tomb, eternizing one's country, green laurels, and reference to the "deux harpeurs," Pindar and Horace. In another ode, after invoking the patronage of other deities upon his verse, he turns to the Dryads, and conjures them:

With ivy deck this favour'd page;
 And let my lyre from age to age
 Still echo on, in strains that rise
 Above this mean earth to the skies,
 Till at the world's extremest bounds,
 The Moor and Briton learn the sounds.⁵⁹

In similar strain Ronsard once more claims affinity with Pindar the Theban poet:

Mon nom, dès l'onde atlantique
 Jusqu'au dos du More antique,
 Soit immortel tesmoigné,
 Et depuis l'isle erratique
 Jusqu'au Breton esloigne,
 A fin que mon labeur croisse
 Et sonoreux apparaisse
 Lyrique par dessus tous,
 Et que Thebes ce cognoisse
 Faite Francoise par nous.⁶⁰

Visioning his fame after death, the poet, in an ode entitled, "On the choice of his tomb," imagines the priests coming annually to his grave and singing a paeon beginning as follows:

"Que tu es renommée
 D'estre tombeau nommée
 D'un de qui l'univers
 Chante le vers."⁶¹

The ode "Au seigneur Carnavalet" represents adequately the verve and confidence with which Ronsard promised immortality to patrons:

C'est un travail de bon-heur
 Chanter les hommes louables,
 Et leur bastir un honneur
 Seul vanqueur des ans muables.
 Le marbre ou l'airain vestu
 D'un labeur vif par l'enclume
 N' animent tant la vertu
 Que les Muses par la plume...

Les neuf divines pucelles
 Gardent ta gloire chez elles;
 Et mon luth, qu'ell-ont fait estre
 De leurs secrets le grand prestre,
 Par cest hymne solennel
 Respandra dessus ta race

Je ne scay quoy de sa grace
Qui te doit faire eternal.⁶²

Turning now to Ronsard's own sonnets proper, we may glance almost anywhere to find him dilating explicitly upon the eternal fame of his verse, or its writer, or the lady involved:

Donne moy l'encre et le papier aussi,
En cent papiers tesmoins de mon souci
Je veux tracer la peine que j'endure:
En cent papiers plus durs que diamant,
A fin qu'un jour nostre race future
Juge du mal que je souffre en aimant.⁶³

A sonnet concluding one book of a Ronsardian romantic sequence is addressed not to Marie but to his volume of poems; a note of bitterness is discernable in it which brings to mind one or two passages from Ovid and Propertius earlier quoted:

Cesse tes pleurs, mon livre: il n'est pas ordonné
Du destin que, moy vif, tu reçoives la gloire;
Avant que passé j'aye outre la rive noire,
L'honneur que l'on te doit ne te sera donné.
Quelqu'un, après mil ans, de mes vers estonné,
Voudra dedans mon Loir comme en Permesse boire,
Et, voyant mon pays, à peine voudra croire
Que d'un si petit champ tel poete soit né.
Pren, mon livre, pren coeur: la vertu precieuse
De l'homme, quand il vit, est toujours odieuse.
Après qu'il est absent, chacun le pense un dieu.
La rancueur nuit toujours a ceux qui sont en vie;
Sur les vertus d'un mort elle n'a plus de lieu,
Et la posterité rend l'honneur sans envie.⁶⁴

Of those sonnets explicitly eternizing the beloved one, the following example is significant in its reference to Petrarch's Laura:

Afin qu'à tout jamais de siècle en siècle vive
La parfaite amitié que Ronsard vous portoit,
Comme vostre beauté la raison luy ostoit,
Comme vous enchaîniez la liberté captive;
Afin que d'âge en âge à nos neveux arrive
Que toute dans mon sang vostre figure estoit
Et que rien sinon vous mon coeur ne souhaittoit,
Je vois fais un present de ceste sempervive.
Elle vit longuement en sa jeune verdure;
Longtemps après la mort je vous feray revivre,

Tant peut le docte soin d'un gentil serviteur,
 Qui veut en vous servant toutes vertus ensuivre.
 Vous vivrez et croistrez comme Laure en grandeur,
 Au moins tant que vivront les plumes et le livre.⁶⁵

One could not do better than conclude this brief glance at Ronsard's mastery of the eternizing conceit by quoting in English the most famous of all his sonnets—one in which the eternization merges delicately into the familiar *carpe diem* motif:

When you are very old, at dusk by candle-light,
 Talking beside the fire the while you spin your wool,
 Singing my verse, you'll say, as something wonderful,
 Thus Ronsard, long ago, for love of me did write.
 Then not a serving maid, grown drowsy with the night
 And slumbering o'er the task she plies beneath your rule,
 But startled at my name will quit her spinning-stool,
 To bless your name with praise the years shall never blight.
 I shall be in my grave, a disembodied ghost,
 Resting where myrtles bloom along the shadowy coast:
 You crouching o'er the hearth will be an aged crone,
 Regretting all the love you proudly put away.
 Wait for no morrow. Ah! believe me, snatch today
 The roses of your life, that shall so soon be gone.⁶⁶

Ronsard, in short, constantly gave voice to the "poetic vaunt of immortality," sometimes achieving eloquence, occasionally sounding to our modern ears only ridiculous, but not infrequently rising to an aplomb and quality of sincerity which justifies its use. From him the Elizabethans must have gleaned, perhaps more directly than from any other single source, material for exploitation of this conceit.

It was in honor of Joachim du Bellay, Ronsard's colleague, that the youthful Spenser wrote, to accompany his translation of "Les Antiquitez de Rome," the following lines—themselves a rather unrestrained tribute to the eternizing convention:

Bellay! first garland of free poesy
 That France brought forth, though fruitful of
 brave wits;
 Well worthy thou of immortality,
 That long hast travel'd by thy learned writs,
 Old Rome out of her ashes to revive,

And give a second life to dead decays ;
 Needs must he all eternity survive ,
 That can to others give eternal days.
 The days, therefore, are endless; and thy praise
 Excelling all that ever went before.⁶⁷

Du Bellay, indeed, in the sonnet sequence which Spenser chose to translate, was quite conscious of his own powers along this line, as is implicit in one passage exulting in the eternal fame of Latin literature in comparison with the crumbled remnants of Rome :

Le corps de Rome en cendre est deaillé
 Et son esprit reioindre s'est allé
 Au grand esprit de ceste masse ronde.
 Mais ses escripts, qui son loz le plus beau
 Malgré le temps arrachent du tumbeau.
 Font son idole errer parmy le monde.⁶⁸

In this context it is not irrelevant, also, to quote du Bellay's version of Ovid's famous vaunt which concludes his *Metamorphoses*; it has parallel weight with Ronsard's adaptation of Horace's famed ode, to indicate the veneration the Pléiade had for the use by these classical poets, as well as by Pindar, of the eternizing convention:

Un oeuvre j'ay parfait, que le feu ni la foudre,
 Ni le fer ni le temps ne pourront mettre en poudre.
 Cestuy-là qui sera le dernier de mes jours
 De mon age incertain vienne borner le cours
 Quand bon luy semblera; sans plus il a puissance
 Dessus ce corps qui est mortel de sa naissance.
 Ce qui est meilleur de moi me portera
 Sur les astres bien haut, et mon nom ne pourra
 Jamais estre effacé; quelque part où se nomme
 Le nom victorieux de l'empire de Rome
 Je seray leu du peuple. Et s'il faut donner foy
 Aux poètes devins, qui predisent de soy,
 A jamais je vivray et la durable gloire
 Des mes oeuvres sera d'éternelle memoire.⁶⁹

More nearly original but in the same general imperial tone is the stirring ode du Bellay composed upon "The Immortality of Poets" :

Arriere tout fune bre chant,
 Arriere tout marbre et peinture,
 Mes cendres ne vont point cherchant
 Le vains honneurs de sepulture,
 Pour n'estre errant cent ans à l'environ
 Des tristes bords de l'avare Acheron.

Mon nom du vil peuple incognu
 N'ira sous terre inhonoré ;
 Les Soeurs du mont dux fois cornu
 M'ont de supulchre decoré
 Qui ne craint point les Aquilons puissans,
 Ni le long cours des siècles renaissans.⁷⁰

Not surprising, then, is the warm admiration couched in eternizing terms by du Bellay and addressed to those Italian poets from whom the Pléiade borrowed so many meters and poetic themes:

Quel siècle etiendra ta memoire
 O Boccace ? et quels durs hyvers
 Pourront jamais seicher la gloire,
 Petrarque, de tes lauriers vers,
 Qui verra la vostre muette,
 Dante, Bembe, a l'esprit hautain?⁷¹

A glance at the sonnets of Philippe Desportes, another member of the Pleiade, finds him also assiduously employing the eternizing convention, even to the hope that his mistress will rival Laura in height of fame :

I trust, in time, her lovely branch will rise,
 Reared by my numbers, to the starry skies;
 And Florence boast no more that scornful maid
 She saw transform'd into a laurel shade.⁷²

And another sonnet, which has affinities with Ronsard's "Quand vous serez bien vieille," is worth quoting both as an evidence of Desporte's style and because it will be cited eventually as a source of at least one Elizabethan eternizing sonnet :

Je verray par les ans, vengeurs de mon martire,
 Que l'or de vos cheveux argenté deviendra,
 Que de vos deux soleils la splendeur s'estiendra,
 Et qu'il faudra qu'Amour tout confus s'en retire.
 La beauté qui, si douce, a présent vous inspire.,
 Cedant aux lois du tans, ses faveurs reprendra;

L'hyver de vostre teint les fleurettes perdra,
 Et ne laissera rien des thresors que j'admire.
 Cet orgueil desdaigneux qui vous fait ne m'aimer,
 En regret et chagrin se verra transformer,
 Avec le changement d'une image si belle,
 Et peut estre qu'alors vous n'aurez déplaisir,
 De revivre en mes verse, chauds d'amoureux désir,
 Ainsi que le phénix au feu se renouvelle.⁷³

Not until the nineties of the 16th century, along with the vogue of the sonnet-sequence itself, did the popularity of the eternizing conceit become obvious in England, some decades after its flowering in Ronsard and his colleagues' sonnets. In *Tottel's Miscellany*, for instance, neither Wyatt nor Surrey is found using the conceit explicitly, although it creeps into some of the less-inspired obituary verse:

Myrrour of matrones, flour of spouslike loue...
 Who printed lives yet in our hertes alway.⁷⁴

Haue, mother, monumentes of our sore smart:
 No costly tomb, areard with curious art:
 Nor Mausolean masse, hoong in the ayre:
 Nor loftie steeples, that will once appayre:
 But wayful verse, and doolfull song accept.
 By verse, the names of auncient peres be kept:
 By verse, liues Hercules: by verse, Achil:
 Hector, Ene, by verse, be famous still.⁷⁵

Father, forbear thy wofull tears, cease, England, too lament:
 Fates fauour none, the enmie death to all alike is bent.
 The onely mean, that now remains, with eloquence full fine,
 Hath Shelley vsed, in setting forth this barons name diuine.
 Your Haddon eke, who erst in your life time, bore you good hart,
 Presenteth you this monument, of woonted zeal some part.⁷⁶

A worthier champion then he was yet Englande neuer had.
 And though recure be past, his life to haue againe,
 Yet would I wish his worthinesse in writyng to remaine.
 That men to minde might call how farre he did excell.⁷⁷

The gift alone I shall her geue
 When death doth what he can:
 Her honest fame shall euer liue,

Within the mouth of man.⁷⁸

One would expect that Thomas Watson in his *Hekatompathia*, laboriously culling the conceits and themes for his pioneering 18-line pseudo-sonnets from Ronsard, Petrarch, Serafino, and scores of Latin and Greek writers, would certainly not omit an essay at the eternizing convention so common with them. However, all that is to be found in his volume is a true sonnet included among the laudatory poems prefaced to the work:

The starr's, which did at Petrarch's byrthday raigne,
Were fixt againe at thy natiuity,
Destening thee the Thuscan's poesie,
Who skald the skies in lofty Quatorzain,
The Muses gaue to thee thy fatall vaine,
The very fame, that Petrarch had, whereby
Madonna Laures fame is growne so hy,
And that whereby his glory he did gaine.
Thou hast a Laure, whom well thou dost commend,
And to her praise thy passion songs do tend;
Yee both such praise deserue, as naught can smother;
In brief with Petrarch and his Laure in grace
Thou and thy Dame be equall, save percase
Thou passe the one, and she excell's the other.⁷⁹

Watson seems to have confined his use of the convention to the "Viue libelle" passage concluding his "Protrepticon" to the volume, in Latin.

It is instructive to note, in passing, that on the final page of his to us epoch-making *Shepherd's Calender*, 1579, Spenser did place the following quatrain:

Loe I haue made a Calender for euery yeare,
That steele in strength, and time in durance shall outweare:
And if I marked well the starres reuolution,
It shall continewe till the world's dissolution.⁸⁰

But he felt bound to defend himself in a prose gloss adjoining the verses, citing the key lines from Horace and Ovid to prove his right to such pomposity!

The vogue of the eternizing conceit was a vigorous adjunct to the vogue of the sonnet-sequence itself, in the last decade of the 16th century in England. "Sir Philip Sidney, in his *Apology*

for *Poetrie*, 1595, wrote that it was the common habit of poets 'to tell you that they will make you immortal by their verses.' 'Men of great calling,' Nashe declared in his *Pierce Pennilesse*, 1593, 'take it of merit to have their names eternised by poets.' In the hands of Elizabethan sonneteers the 'eternizing' faculty of their verse became a staple and indeed an inevitable topic.⁸¹ One finds Francis Meres in his *Palladis Tamia*, 1598, fulsomely eternizing the eternizers themselves:

As Ovid saith of his worke —
 Jamque opus exegi [etc., two lines quoted]
 and as Horace saith of his, —
 Exegi monumentum [etc., five lines quoted]
 so say I severally of Sir Philip Sidneys, Spencers, Daniels,
 Draytons, Shakespeares, and Warners workes —
 Non Jovis ira, imores, Mars, ferrum, flamma, senectus
 Hoc opus unda, lues, turbo, venena ruent.
 Et quamquam ad pulcherrimum hoc opus euertendum tres illi Dii,
 conspirabunt, Cronus, Vulcanus, et pater ipse gentis: —
 Non tamen annorum series, non flamma, nec ensis,
 Aeternum potuit hoc abolera dieus.⁸²

Most of the approximately twenty sonnet sequences of romantic type then published and now extant included one or more passages developing the eternizing convention on more or less standard lines, while four or five of the more mature and ambitious sonneteers employed it quite extensively. However, certain Elizabethans, such as Griffin and Barnfield, were such fledgling poets as not to venture the "vaunt of immortality"; some other sonneteers, in later years after the crest of the wave had vanished, found this conceit worn too thin for effectiveness. Yet Ben Jonson as late as 1602, in chanting the praises of Poetry, could write:

She can so mould Rome and her monuments
 Within the liquid marble of her lines,
 That they shall live, fresh and miraculous
 Even in the midst of innovating dust.⁸⁴

Considering the popularity and influence of Sidney's *Astro-*

phel and Stella, publication of which in 1591 really initiated the fad of Elizabethan romantic sonnet-sequences, it is remarkable in one sense that the eternizing conventions survived to be exploited later! For Sidney gave it short shrift:

Stella, think not that I by verse seek fame;
Who seek, who hope, who love, who live but thee.
Thine eyes my pride; thy lips mine history:
If thou praise not, all other praise is shame.
Not so ambitious am I as to frame
A nest for my young praise in laurel tree:
In truth I swear, I wish not there should be
Graved in my epitaph, a Poet's name.⁸⁵

Again, the poet forbids readers to deduce allegory or esoteric philosophy from his love sonnets, saying:

I list not dig so deep for brazen fame.⁸⁶

And in a question-answer sonnet there are these ambiguous lines:

"Art not ashamed to publish thy disease?"
Nay that may breed my fame. It is so rare.⁸⁷

However, Sidney did condescend to touch the borderline of the conceit, in his advice to would-be sonneteers (advice to be regarded with the same suspicion as is tendered to his "Fool,... look in thy heart, and write!" in view of Sidney's actual extensive borrowings of conventional themes):

You that poor Petrarch's long deceased woes,
With newborn sighs and denizen'd wit do sing:
You take wrong ways! Those far-fet help be such
As do bewray a want of inward touch;
And sure at length, stolen goods do come to light.
But if (both for your love and skill) your name
You seek to nurse at fullest breasts of Fame:
Stella behold! and then begin to endite.⁸⁸

Probably fellow-poets recognized Sidney's rejection of the eternizing conceit as itself a conventional device. In the same 1591 volume, a sonnet by Daniel preliminary to the group appended to *Astrophel* indefatigably repeats the classic "monument" motif:

Go, wailing verse! the infant of my love...
Sigh out a story of her cruel deeds,

With interrupted accents of despair;
A monument that whosoever reads,
May justly praise and blame my loveless Fair.⁸⁹

Also in this series is the sonnet by Daniel adapted from Desportes' "Je verray par les ans":

Once may I see, when years may wreck my wrong,
And golden hairs may change to silver wire:
And those bright rays (that kindle all this fire),
Shall fail in force, their power not so strong.
Her beauty, now the burden of my song,
Whose glorious blaze the world's eye doth admire,
Must yield her praise to tyrant Time's desire;
Then fades the flower, which fed her pride so long.
When, if she grieve to gaze her in her glass,
Which then presents her winter-withered hue,
Go you my verse! go tell her what she was!
For what she was, she best may find in you.
Your fiery heat lets not her glory pass.
But Phoenix-like to make her live anew.⁹⁰

Samuel Daniel was a persistent eternizer, whose labours are the more interesting because they are said to have perhaps furnished Shakespeare a model for his more brilliant use of the same theme.⁹¹ In the 1592 and 1594 editions of his *Delia* we find several examples of the conceit, among them a more pompous rendering of the one just quoted above:

When Winter snows upon thy golden hairs,
And frost of Age hath nipped thy flowers near;
When dark shall seem thy day, that never clears,
And all lies withered that was held so dear:
Then take this picture, which I here present thee!
Limned with a pencil, not all unworthy,
Here, see the gifts that God and Nature lent thee!
Here, read thy Self! and what I suffered for thee!
This may remain thy lasting monument,
Which, happily, posterity may cherish:
These colours, with thy fading, are not spent;
These may remain, when thou and I shall perish.
If they remain, then thou shalt live thereby!
They will remain, and so thou canst not die!⁹²

In the ensuing sonnet, while deprecating his powers in comparison with those of Petrarch, Daniel yet ventures to insist:

But I may add one feather to thy fame,
To help her flight throughout the fairest Isle;
And if my pen could more enlarge thy name,
Then should'st thou live in an immortal style.⁹³

Still upon the same subject, a third consecutive sonnet cautions Delia not to be ashamed that the world hears Daniel's "careful accents" in praise of her "chastest flame":

How many live, the glory of whose name
Shall rest in ice, while thine is graved in marble!
Thou may'st, in after ages, live esteemed!
Unburied in these lines, reserved in pureness.
These shall entomb those eyes, that have redeemed
Me, from the vulgar; thee, from all obscurity.⁹⁴

And the fourth in this remarkable series, meditating on the oblivion meted out to most ambitions, arrives at the following datum:

Yet found I, that no barbarous hand attained
The spoil of Fame, deserved by virtuous men,
Whose glorious actions, luckily, had gained
Th'eternal annals of a happy pen.
Why then, though Delia fade! let that not move her!⁹⁵

It might be well to pause here to reflect that Daniel's dedication of his verse to the Countess of Pembroke removed from his scope many of the more sensuous conceits; perhaps this accounts for his unusual emphasis upon the immortalizing theme.⁹⁶ A few sonnets just before the end of the sequence embark again upon new variations of the poet's eternization:

Authentic shall my verse, in time to come,
When yet the unborn shall say, 'Lo, where she lies!
Whose beauty made him speak, that else was dumb!'
These are the arks the trophies I erect,
That fortify thy name against old age;
And these, thy sacred virtues must protect
Against the dark, and Time's consuming rage.
Though th'error of my youth, they shall discover;
Suffice they shew I lived, and was thy lover!⁹⁷

Comparing himself to the misguided Roman assassin, whose frustrated attempt yet gained him immortality, Daniel says:

So, Delia! hath mine error made me known,
 And my deceived attempt, deserved more fame:
 Than if I had the victory mine own,
 And thy hard heart had yielded up the same.
 And so, likewise, renowned is thy blame!
 Thy cruelty! thy glory!⁹⁸

A sturdier expression, which should be kept in mind in connection with one of Shakespeare's sonnets, begins:

None other fame, mine unambitious Muse
 Affected ever, but t'eternize Thee!
 All other honours do my hopes refuse,
 Which meaner prized and momentary be.
 For, God forbid! I should my papers blot
 With mercenary lines, with servile pen;
 Praising virtues in them that have them not,
 Basely attending on the hopes of men.⁹⁹

And Daniel concludes by maintaining that simple Avon, not the conventional Thames, will be celebrated in his honest verse.

Turning to the next sequence in order of publication, *Diana*, 1592 (augmented edition, 1594), one finds Constable mentioning the eternizing conceit only to reject it in the same breath:

my verses might
 Tell all the beams of your divinity:
 Which praise to you, and joy should be to me;
 You living by my verse, I by your sight!
 I by your sight, and not you by my verse,
 Need mortal skill immortal praise rehearse?
 No, no, though eyes were blind, and verse were dumb,
 Your beauty should be seen and your fame known.¹⁰⁰

Graceful, but hardly convincing—as Constable himself acknowledges when, toward the end of the sequence, he expresses himself in the more accepted, if stilted, manner:

When reinterment from oblivious ages,
 In better stanzas her surviving wonder:
 I may opposed against the monster—rages
 That part desert and excellence asunder:
 That she, though coy, may yet survive to see,
 Her beauty's wonder lives yet again in me.¹⁰¹

Elsewhere the poet represents himself as what modern Hollywood would term a press agent!—though an admittedly erudite one:

But more thou forc'st, making my pen approve
Thy praise to all, least any had dissented...
Thy chaste fair gifts, with learning's breath is blown.
And thus my pen hath made thy sweets admired!¹⁰²

And finally, in a novel and delightful variation of the old the me,
Constable admits that he, like Prometheus of old, is now bound:

for stealing living beauty's fire
Into my verse, that it may always live.¹⁰³

Infinite indeed have been the melodies twanged upon the one
string!

Among the sonnet sequences published in 1593, Watson's
Teares of Fancie, written like his *Hekatompathia* to no single
named lady, yields least of interest in respect to the eternizing
conceit; one sonnet embodies a compliment ambiguous to say
the least:

Some say that women love for to be praised,
But droope when as they think their faire must die:
Joying to have their beauties glorie raised,
By fames shril trompe above the starrie skie.
I then whom want of skill might be with drawing,
Extold her beautie not as yet deserued.¹⁰⁴

The derivative sonnets of Fletcher's *Licia* include a classic dis-
quisition on the "Sighs" sent by the poet to his love:

Accept them, Sweet, as incense due to thee!
For you immortal made them so to be.¹⁰⁵

Toward the end of the sequence, also, is the more standard
display of the conceit, albeit in a humble vein:

And if my tongue eternize can your praise,
Or silly speech increase your worthy fame;
If aught I can, to heaven your worth can raise,
The Age to come shall wonder at the same.¹⁰⁶

In *Phillis* Thomas Lodge seems to throw the burden of eterniza-
tion upon his fair one—as well he might, considering that he him-
self seldom assumed any burden of originality:

Support these languishing conceits that perish!
Look on their growth; perhaps these silly small things
May win this worthy palm, so you do cherish.
Homer hath vowed, and I with him do vow this,

He will and shall revive, if you allow this.¹⁰⁷

The eccentric Barnes, in *Parthenophil and Parthenope*, succeeded in writing all his sonnet sequence without recourse to the eternizing conceit, but duly supplied a "vaunt" in his final dedicatory lyric, "To the beautiful Lady, The Lady Bridget Manners" (the sequence was dedicated to several such paragons!):

Here thou shalt find thy frown!
Here, thy sunny smiling!
Fame's plumes fly with thy Love's, which should be fleetest!
Here, my loves' tempests and showers!
These, read, sweet Beauty! whom my Muse shall crown!
Who for thee! such a Garland is compiling,
Of so divine scents and colours,
As is immortal, Time beguiling!¹⁰⁸

But one of Barnes' elegies in the same volume, begging his lady to decide upon his life or death, ejaculates:

Do this! ah this! and still be glorified!
Do this! and let eternities enrol
Thy fame and name! Let them enrol for ever
In lasting records of still lasting steel!
Do this! ah this! and famous still persevere!
Which in another Age, thy ghost shall feel.
Yet, howsoever, thou, with me shall deal;
Thy beauty shall persevere in my Verse!
And thine eyes' wound, which thine heart would not heal!
And my complaints, which could not thine heart pierce!
And thine hard heart, thy beauty's shameful stain!
And that foul stain thine endless infamy!
So, though Thou still in record do remain,
The records reckon but thine obloquy!
When on the paper, which my Passion bears,
Relenting readers, for my sake! shed tears!..¹⁰⁹

One is indeed inclined to shed tears, but not relenting ones; such a peroration is a conceit to end all eternizing conceits!

Michael Drayton was a serious student of the eternizing convention, and by the time his *Idea*, first printed in 1594, achieved final augmented form in 1619, he had produced wellnigh a dozen passages ramifying this fertile theme. His solid French and classical grounding is apparent from the first:

How many paltry foolish painted Things,
 That now in coaches trouble every street,
 Shall be forgotten (whom no Poet sings)
 Ere they be well wrapped in their winding sheet!
 Where I, to thee Eternity shall give!
 When nothing else remaineth of these days.
 And Queens hereafter shall be glad to live
 Upon the alms of thy superfluous praise.
 Virgins and matrons, reading these my rhymes,
 Shall be so much delighted with thy Story,
 That they shall grieve they lived not in these Times,
 To have seen Thee, their sex's only glory!
 So shalt thou fly above the vulgar throng,
 Still to survive in my immortal Song.¹¹⁰

Drayton also has a most grisly rendering of the allied "when you are old" theme, which Ronsard, Desportes, and Daniel have been heretofore quoted as employing variously:

There's nothing grieve me, but that Age should haste,
 That in my days, I may not see thee old!
 That where those two clear sparkling Eyes are placed,
 Only two loopholes, then I might behold!
 That lovely arched ivory-polished Brow
 Defaced with wrinkles, that I might but see!
 Thy dainty Hair, so curled and crisped now,
 Like grizzled moss upon some aged tree!
 Thy Cheek, now flush with roses, sunk and lean!
 Thy Lips, with age as any wafer thin!
 Thy pearly Teeth, out of thy head so clean,
 That when thou feed'st, thy Nose shall touch thy Chin!
 These Lines that now thou scornst, which should delight thee:
 Then would I make thee read, but to despite thee!¹¹¹

In another curious sonnet, "To the Shadow," Drayton declares that in view of the impermanence of all other media, "letters and lines," "paper and ink" included, therefore:

O sweetest Shadow, how thou serv'st my turn!
 Which still shalt be, as long as there is sun,
 Nor whilst the world is, never shall be done;
 Whilst moon shall shine, or any fire shall burn:
 That everything whence shadow doth proceed,
 May in his shadow, my Love's story read.¹¹²

Using the more conventional Phoenix motif, he ends one sonnet:

And winged by Fame, you to the stars ascend!
So you, of time shall live beyond the end.¹¹³

In the next one he calls on "speedy Time" to pause, behold his beloved, and then:

Pass on! and to posterity tell this!...
Say to our nephews, that thou once hast seen
In perfect human shape, all Heavenly Bliss!¹¹⁴

A later sonnet finds Drayton complaining, as Petrarch did before him, that geographical or language restrictions obtain:

Else should my Lines glide on the waves of Rhine,
And crown the Pyren's with my living Song.¹¹⁵

But he summons his poems forth to "get glory" in Scotland and Ireland, expecting even that "wolves and bears be charmed" by them. Yet, in a different mood, the same poet asserts humbly:

No public glory vainly I pursue:
All that I seek is to eternize you!¹¹⁶

In yet another sonnet, however, he calls upon anyone who has really gone through the purgatory of love:

Thou, thus whose spirit, Love in his fire refines!
Come thou and read, admire, applaud my Lines!¹¹⁷

The noblest of Drayton's sonnets involving this convention remains yet to be quoted—"the most closely Shakespearean of them all"—a vigorous interweaving of the eternizing conceit proper with the more general "vaunt of immortality," echoing Horace and Pindar:

Whilst thus my pen strives to eternize thee,
Age rules my lines with wrinkles in my face;
Where, in the Map of all my Misery,
Is modelled out the World of my disgrace:
Whilst in despite of tyrannizing Times,
Medealike, I make thee young again!
Proudly thou scorn'st my world-outwearing rhymes,
And murder'st Virtue with thy coy disdain!
And though in youth my youth untimely perish,
To keep Thee from oblivion and the grave;
Ensuing Ages yet my Rhymes shall cherish,
Where I entombed, my better part to save;
And though this earthly body fade and die,
My name shall mount upon Eternity!¹¹⁸

The author of *Zepheria*, 1594, prefaces his sequence with a

fulsome tribute to "ye modern Laureates," on whose "sweet lines, Eternity doth sit," enabling them to "make your Mistress live When Time is dead!" by use of their "pens the Trumps to Immortality."¹¹⁹ One page finds the poet confident:

Yet, then, in these limned lines ennobled more,
Thou shalt survive, richer accomplished than before!¹²⁰

But overleaf the lover guilelessly retracts his boast:

No! no, Zepheria! Fame is too rich a prize
My all-unmeriting lines for to attend on!
The best applause of my Muse, on thine eyes
Depends!¹²¹

Later, in a canzone, the poet enrolls his Zepheria among the Muses, furnishing her with a "veil immortal" and "wing of immortality."¹²² To such lengths were lesser poets forced, in decorating a worn theme!

Spenser's *Amoretti*, 1595, is the last considerable sonnet sequence before Shakespeare's *Sonnets* published fourteen years later, although a half-dozen minor works—most of them not embodying any use of the eternizing conceit—are scattered through the last five years of the century. Two earlier passages in the *Amoretti* accept the convention with no great meed of original variation; after descanting on death's decay, the poet warns his lady that eventually of her body all trace will be lost:

Ne any mention shall thereof remain,
But what this verse, that never shall expire,
Shall to your purchase with her thankless pain!
Fair! be no longer proud of that shall perish;
But that, which shall make you immortal, cherish.¹²³

Again, Spenser promises that if his lady will

accept me as her faithful thrall;
That her great triumph, which my skill exceeds;
I may in trump of fame blaze over all.
Then would I deck her head with glorious bays,
And fill the world with her victorious praise.¹²⁴

A third sonnet, still in conventional pattern, finds the poet pondering what kind of trophy to create to "record the memory Of my love's conquest," inevitably choosing:

Even this verse, vow'd to eternity,
Shall be thereof immortal monument;
And tell her praise to all posterity,
That may admire such world's rare wonderment;
The happy purchase of my glorious spoil,
Gotten at last with labour and long toil.¹²⁵

The freshness of this sestet lies not in the dexterity of the conceit but in the fact that mutual love, not hardheartedness, is the event to be immortalized.

Spenser's fourth essay at treatment of the eternizing convention is his happiest, embodied in the wellknown sonnet with the homely, natural incident introducing it:

One day I wrote her name upon the strand;
But came the waves, and washed it away:
Again, I wrote it with a second hand;
But came the tide, and made my pains his prey.
Vain man, said she, that dost in vain assay
A mortal thing so to immortalize;
For I myself shall like to this decay,
And eke my name be wiped out likewise.
Not so, quoth I, let baser things devise
To die in dust, but you shall live by fame:
My verse your virtues rare shall eternize,
And in the heavens write your glorious name.
Where, when as death shall all the world subdue,
Our love shall live, and later life renew.¹²⁶

To such tender, mature control of the "vaunt of immortality" did the Spenser come, who had so awkwardly eternized Du Bellay sixteen years before, and who could not manage a tribute less stilted, in 1591, than the following addressed to the Earl of Warwick's widowed Countess:

Thy Lord shall never die the whiles this verse
Shall live, and surely it shall live forever:
Forever it shall live, and shall rehearse
His worthie praise, and vertues dying never,
Though death his soul doo from his body sever;
And thou thyself herein shalt also live:
Such grace the heavens doo to my verses give.¹²⁷

Of the second-rate sonneteers whose work appeared in 1596, one sonnet from Linche's *Diella* ended thus feebly:

O pity me, fair Love! and highest fame
Shall blazed be, in honour of thy name.¹²⁸

William Smith in his *Chloris* found it indeed an up-hill task, when he ground out:

And this I do protest, most fairest Fair,
My Muse shall never cease that hill to climb,
To which the learned Muses do repair!
And all to deify thy name in rhyme.¹²⁹

Thus anticlimactically comes to its close a survey of fifty-odd passages intended to cover the efforts of Elizabethan sonneteers to employ the "vaunt of immortality" or, more specifically, the "eternizing conceit." One's impression is that the concept, save for sporadic happy treatments by the more talented of the poets, has been worn threadbare, so much so that later sonnet writers halfunconsciously steered clear of its use. At any rate, only against such a background of relative familiarity with the origins, history, and contemporary developments of the eternizing convention can one make even a partially successful effort to criticize and evaluate Shakespeare's work in this field. Not that any foolhardy attempts will be made to trace definite and isolated sources for a given Shakespearean eternizing passage; the general theme of immortality was "dans l'air" during the last decade of the 16th century, and for this concept even more than for other poetic conceits it would be dangerous to make far-fetched analogies.

His three "monument" sonnets may be considered initially. With the sonorous ring of this potent word echoing from Horace down through Ronsard to Drayton and Spenser, any poem based upon it need not be expected to stand on its own feet wholly, or derive its effect from novelty. When Shakespeare writes, at the conclusion of a fascinating sonnet:

death to me subscribes,
Since spight of him Ile liue in this poore rime,
While he insults ore dull and speechless tribes.
And thou in this shalt finde thy monument,
When tyrants crests and tombs of brasce are spent,¹³¹

relatively speaking the effect is anticlimax, conventionality: not only the key word but also "tyrant," "tomb," and "brass" are echoes of divers earlier vaunts, matrixed vigorously enough but not with any particular brilliance. Another sonnet is more centrally constructed about the "monument" motif:

Or I shall liue your Epitaph to make,
Or you suruiue when I in earth am rotten,
From hence your memory death cannot take,
Although in me each part will be forgotten.
Your name from hence immortall life shall haue,
Though I (once gone) to all the world must dye,
The earth can yeeld me but a common graue,
When you intombd in mens eyes shall lye,
Your monument shall be my gentle verse,
Which eyes not yet created shall ore-read,
And touns to be, your beeing shall rehearse,
When all the breathers of this world are dead,
You still shall liue (such vertue hath my Pen)
Where breath most breaths, euen in the mouths of men.¹³²

The first eight lines are actually the same couplet thrice repeated dexterously with variations in rhetoric and imagery; the effect is sonorous but windy. In the next six lines the "monument" motif is introduced placidly enough, though the concreteness of the "eyes" and "touns" instead of the customary "posterity" is good; the word-play on "breath" is conventional; and the last phrase was originally from Ennius. We must turn to Shakespeare's other rendering of this particular concept, to sense his true mastery:

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of Princes shall out-liue this powrefull rime,
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Then vnswept stone, besmeer'd with sluttish time.
When wastefull warre shall Statues ouer-turne,
And broiles roote out the worke of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword, nor warres quick fire shall burne:
The liuing record of your memory.
Gainst death, and all obliuious enmity
Shall you pace forth, your praise shall still finde roome,
Euen in the eyes of all posterity
That weare this world out to the ending doome.

So til the iudgement that your selfe arise,
You liue in this, and dwell in louers eies.¹³³

This is Horace plus Ovid plus genius. Every ramification of the thought except perhaps the intentionally ugly contrast in the fourth line is conventional to banality, but the ensemble is magnificent, unless one takes exception to slighter-textured final couplet. The slow syllabics of the tenth line and the resounding portent of the twelfth are particularly effective elements. The whole poem sweeps one to the conviction—despite the hundred cumulative evidences in the present paper to the contrary—that Shakespeare did “look.....in [his] heart” and wrote. And why not?—granting that in his “heart” lay in germinant solution all the score of subsidiary motifs and images common to the theme, materials which Shakespeare himself had before employed with varying success but which he mortised together at this inspired moment to an intensity not elsewhere achieved. No doubt it represents the eternizing concept at its peak—at least in its “monument” phase.

For the minor phrase “shine bright” in the above sonnet is transferred to the key concluding position in the other poem which many rank with the one just quoted: namely, the one in which relentless Time, “battring dayes,” rather than war or vandalism, is the opponent of the poet’s efforts:

Since brasse, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundlesse sea,
But sad mortality ore-swaies their power,
How with this rage shall beautie hold a plea,
Whose action is no stronger then a flower?
O how shall summers hunny breath hold out
Against the wrackfull sledge of battring dayes,
When rocks impregnable are not so stoute,
Nor gates of steele so strong but time decayes?
O fearefull meditation, where alack,
Shall times best Iewell from times chest lie hid?
Or what strong hand can hold his swift foote back,
Or who his spoile of beautie can forbid?
O none, vnlesse this miracle haue might,
That in black inck my loue may still shine bright.¹³⁴

How much firmer-textured and pregnant with doom this "meditation" is than Shakespeare's somewhat similar but more derivative sonnet which concludes with an ephemeral bit of word-play:

His beautie shall in these blacke lines be seene,
And ther shall liue, and he in them still greene.¹³⁵

Another sonnet on the same theme, of "devouring time," is yet more a *tour de force*; after forbidding the encroachment of decay upon his lover, the poet utters a proud *defi*:

Yet do thy worst ould Time dispight thy wrong,
My loue shall in my yerse euer liue young.¹³⁶

Felicitous phrasing and melody achieve for another treatment of a similar motif escape from banality:

But thy eternall Sommer shall not fade,
Nor loose possession of that faire thou ow'st,
Nor shall death brag thou wandr'st in his shade,
When in eternall lines to time thou grow'st,
So long as men can breath, or eyes can see,
So long liues this, and this giues life to thee.¹³⁷

The concluding couplet of a third sonnet revolving about the onset of time fails, as happens not infrequently in Shakespeare's sonnets, to maintain the intensity of the preceding quatrains:

And yet to times in hope, my verse shall stand
Praising thy worth, dispight his cruell hand.¹³⁸

The same is perhaps truer yet of the last lines of another sonnet exploiting a horticultural conceit:

And all in war with Time for loue of you
As he takes from you, I ingraft you new.¹³⁹

In one sonnet which may have deep metaphysical meaning but which superficially dallies with the contrast in perfumes between the rose and the "canker," the concluding couplet is again too facile:

And so of you, beautilous and louely youth,
When that shall fade, my verse distils your truth.¹⁴⁰

Addressing his own "forgetfull Muse" in another poem, Shakespeare bids it hasten to its preservative task:

Giue my loue fame faster then time wasts life,
So thou preuenst his sieth, and crooked knife.¹⁴¹

This is one of the most banal and uninspired of the sonnets, even

to the duplicated term for "scythe" to complete the rhyme. Evidently Shakespeare (barred from use of several regions of conceits by the male sex of his friend) was led—as was Daniel, but for a different reason—to employ the eternizing convention simply more often than even his superb genius could support. The sonnet adjacent to the above-quoted lines, for instance, continues the address to the poet's muse, forbidding her silence, since it is her power:

To make him much out-live a gilded tombe:
And to be praised of ages yet to be.
Then do thy office Muse, I teach thee how,
To make him seeme long hence, as he shoves now.¹⁴²

This seems but a pale echo of the "gilded monuments" followed by a couple of relatively insipid phrases.

Legal terms give point to what is otherwise a second-rate sonnet insofar as its eternizing aspect is concerned:

My life hath in this line some interest,
Which for memoriall still with thee shall stay.¹⁴³

Another sonnet in which Shakespeare imagines himself dead and his poems in the hand of his lover, has its eternizing theme diluted and complicated by a sense of humbleness, or perhaps a trace of the "rival" motif:

And though they be out-stript by every pen,
Reserve them for my love, not for their rime.¹⁴⁴

The eternizing concept is also distorted necessarily by its presence together with the "beget-a-child" motif in the transitional sonnet ending the seventeen devoted to that request:

Who will beleue my verse in time to come
If it were fild with your most high deserts?...
But were some childe of yours alive that time,
You should live twice, in it and in my rime.¹⁴⁵

Needful of mention in connection with the approximately fifteen sonnets from which the above-quoted eternizing passages have been taken, is one poem in which the young writer proudly denies membership among those professional eulogists "stir'd by a painted beauty," who "heaven itself for ornament doth use";¹⁴⁶

also note, as a counterbalance to weight of eternizing, the mor-
dantly powerful sonnet beginning, "Noe longer mourne for me
when I am dead" and continuing with more appearance of bitter
sincerity than was evident in a half-dozen eternizing couplets
together:

Nay if you read this line, remember not,
The hand that writ it, for I loue you so,
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe...
Do not so much as my poore name reherse;
But let your loue even with my life decay.¹⁴⁷

One may also wisely keep in mind the several superlative
sonnets in which the "times fell hand" pictured so plangently is
not snubbed by a deft but brittle eternizing-verse-twist in the
final couplet.¹⁴⁸ In short, save for three or four excellent sonnets
in which Shakespeare's "vaunt of immortality" for himself or his
friend overrode conventional limitations to achieve full intensity,
even this greatest poet could not infuse life into a bandied-about
conceit, a theme sucked dry by scores of poets from Pindar to
Spenser. That he did in certain instances produce—by inspired
concretion of those well-worn pebbles of imagery or rhetoric—a
completely convincing "Shakespearean" sonnet is amazing enough.
Even his relative failures, compared with the drab pastiches
dabbed together by other sonneteers cited in this article, are
successful.

The present modest study may serve to bring the whole area
of the "poetic vaunt of immortality" into better focus—its back-
ground, development, and highest specimens of achievement—so
that even Shakespeare's masterpieces can be studied more know-
ledgeably and dispassionately in one intriguing aspect. And
(although we return with pleasure to MacLeish's brilliant poem
as an exception that "proves the rule"), one completes this survey
with a practical bit of advice to would-be poets: Let your
"eternizing" be implicit in the quality of your verse, not explicit
in boasting words. Your successive generations of readers,
then, will take care of your "monument."¹⁴⁹

FOOTNOTES

¹ Sonnet LV is present and discussed *infra* on page 34.

² See the quoting and comment on Horace's Ode xxx of *Odes*, Book III, in this article, page 7.

³ A familiar passage in Ruskin's *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*.

⁴ Such is the title of Sidney Lee's section, pp. 276-281, of *The French Renaissance in England* (London, 1910), dealing with the eternizing convention.

⁵ In pp. 186-188 of his *A Life of William Shakespeare* (London, 4th ed., revised, 1925), Sidney Lee covers the topic rather summarily, chiefly in a footnote. I am in debt to his discussion, but must point out that his citations for Sappho and for Ennius are of dubious validity, while his reference for Martial is patently erroneous.

Other material, partly overlapping the terse discussion cited above, is furnished in Lee's introduction to his two-volume anthology, *Elizabethan Sonnets*, and in his *The French Renaissance in England* (*vide supra*). Alden has quoted from these sources in pp.139-140 of his *Sonnets of Shakespeare* (London, 1915).

⁶ Pindar, Nemean Ode VII, 21-3, translated by A. S. Way in his volume, *The Odes of Pindar* (London, 1922, p. 122). All succeeding page references for Pindar are to this edition.

⁷ Pythian Ode XI, 41-2, *ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

⁸ Olympian Ode XI, 5-8, *ibid.*, p. 38.

⁹ Nemean Ode VII, 15-21, *ibid.*, p.121.

¹⁰ Isthmian Ode VII, 16-19, *ibid.*, p.156. Another specimen, from Isthmian Ode IV, 40-42, on p.149, is a forthright vaunt:

For a noble song passeth down the years with a voice that liveth for aye,
And over the harvest-abounding earth, and across the sea for ever
Goeth the sunbright shining of noble deeds, to be quenched never.

¹¹ Pythian Ode III, 112-117, *ibid.*, p.64.

¹² Pythian Ode V, 48-50, *ibid.*, p. 78 ; the boast is again made in the same ode, 106-7, p. 80. In Pythian Ode XI, 60, p. 100, Pindar names

his victorious athlete :

So Kastor's might lives on in poesy's strain.

¹³ Nemean Ode IV, 81-86, *ibid.*, p. 114. See also the "treasure house song-upholden," Pythian Ode VI, 7 ff., p. 82.

¹⁴ Nemean Ode V, 1-3, *ibid.*, p. 115.

¹⁵ No attempt has been made in this paper, incidentally, to survey thoroughly Hebrew literature of the Old Testament to ascertain evidence of exploitation of this motif. The Psalms yield no evidence of it *per se*, but there is an approximation of it in Deborah's ancient Song (Judges, chapter 5) where she visualizes later and distant rehearsers of her paean (verses 10, 11) :

Tell of it, you who ride on tawny asses,
you who sit on rich carpets
and you who walk by the way.
To the sound of music at the watering places,
there they repeat the triumphs of the Lord,
the triumphs of his peasantry in Israel.

¹⁶ Fragment No. 32 in Bergk's *Poetae Lyrici Graeci*, ed. 3, p. 888, v. 3. Translated by F. Brooks, p. 44 of *Greek Lyric Poets*, 1896. (Incidentally, Sidney Lee gives a reference to No. 16—but this fragment is not at all relevant to the eternizing conceit.)

¹⁷ Brooks, *ibid.*, p. 111.

¹⁸ Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, I, 34. (Sidney Lee's reference to this quotation in Cicero, *De Senectute* is faulty, and the couplet he quotes lacks the vital final words of Latin here supplied:

Nemo me lacrumis decoret nec funera fletu
faxit ! Cur ! Volito vivos per ora virum.

¹⁹ Catullus, LXXVII, translated by Horace Gregory, *The Poems of Catullus*, 1931, pp. 270-1. Succeeding references are to this spirited version. The Latin was as follows :

Uerum id non impune feres : nam te omnia saecula
moscent, et qui sis fama loquetur anus.

²⁰ Catullus, XL, *ibid.*, pp. 96-7.

²¹ Catullus, XII, *ibid.*, pp. 30-1. The Latin is succinct :

Quare aut hendecasyllabos trecentos
expecta, aut mihi linteum remitte.

Another "vaunt" by Catullus is an early specimen focused on eternizing of a mistress, though whether its ambiguity portends promise or threat only the embarrassed lover addressed could adequately judge ! Poem VI, pp. 16-17, as translated :

No matter who she is or why,
I'll immortalize you
and your dear young lady
in a blushing blissful song
that echoes against heaven.

²²Catullus, LXVIII-B, *ibid.*, pp. 240-1, The Latin follows :

Non possum reticere, deae, qua me Allius in re
iverit aut quantis iverit officiis,
re fugiens saeculis obliviscentibus aetas
illius hoc caeca nocte tegat studium :
sed dicam vobis, vos porro dicite multis
milibus et facite haec carta loquatur anus...

Notescatque magis mortuus atque magis,
nec tenuen texeus sublimis aranea telam
in deserto Alli nomine opus faciat...

Pro multis, Alli, redditur officiis,
ne vestrum scabra tangat rubigine nomen.

²³Virgil, *Georgics*, III, 46-48, translated by J. Lonsdale and S. Lee, *The Works of Virgil Rendered into English Prose*, 1920, p. 55 :

Mox tamen ardentis accingar dicere pugnas
Caesaris, et nomen fama tot ferre per annos,
Tithoni prima quot abest ab origine Caesar.

²⁴Virgil, *Aeneid*, IX, 446-9, translated by Fairclough, Loeb edition, pp. 142-3. The Latin lines are famous :

Fortunati ambo ! si quid mea carmina possunt,
nulla dies umquam memori vos eximet aevo,
dum domus Aeneae Capitoli immobile saxum
accolet imperiumque pater Romanus habebit.

²⁵Horace, *Odes*, Bk. I, i, 29-30, 35-36, translated by H. MacNaghten,

The Odes of Horace, 1926, pp. 4-5.

Me doctarum hederae praemia frontium
dis miscent superis...

quodsi me lyricis vatibus inseres,
sublimi feriam sidera vertice.

²⁶*Odes*, Bk. III, xxv, 3-6, *ibid.*, pp. 192-3, with the Latin :

Quibus
antris egregii Caesaris audiar
aeternum meditans decus
stellis inserere et consilio Iovis ?

In *Odes*, Bk. II, xx, Horace calmly views his approaching death, and prophesies immortality for himself, using the swan motif (cf. Plato, *Republic*, 620-a).

²⁷*Odes*, Bk. IV, ix, 30-34, as translated by McNaghten.

²⁸*Odes*, Bk. III, xxx, 1-8, *ibid.*, pp. 208-9; the passage is also quoted in Sidney Lee's *Life of William Shakespeare*, pp. 186-7, along with the similar passage from Ovid :

Exegi monumentum aere perennius
regalique situ pyramidum altius,
quod non imber edax, non Aquilo impotens
possit diruere, aut innumerabilis
annorum series, et fuga temporum.
Non omnis moriar, multaque pars mei
vitabit Libitinam : usque ego postera
crescam laude recens...

²⁹*Odes*, Bk. IV, viii, 13-15, 19-20, *ibid.*, pp. 236-7.

Non incisa notis marmora publicis,
per quae spiritus et vita redit bonis
post mortem ducibus...

Clarius indicant
laudes, quam Calabrae Pierides.

³⁰Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, xv, 871 ff.

Jamque opus exegi, quod nec Jovis ira nec ignes
nec poterit ferrum, nec edax abolere vetustas.
Cum volet illa dies, quae nil nisi corporis hucus

jus habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat aevi;
parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis
astra ferar nomenque erit indelebile nostrum.

³¹Ovid, *Tristia*, III, iii, 77-80, translated by A. L. Wheeler, Loeb ed., pp. 114-5. (See also *Tristia*, I, vi, 35-6, *ibid.*, pp. 36-7.)

Etenim maiora libelli
et diuturna magis sunt monimenta mihi;
quos ego confido, quam vis nocuere, daturos
nomen et auctori tempora longa suo.

³²Ovid, *Amores*, I, xv, 39-42, translated by Grant Showerman, Loeb ed., pp. 378-9.

Pascitur in vivis Livor, post fata quiescit,
cum suus ex merito quemque tuetur honos.
Ergo etiam cum me supremus adederrit ignis,
vivam, parisque mei multa superstes erit.

³³Ovid, *Ex Ponto*, IV, viii, 45-8, translated by A. L. Wheeler, Loeb ed., pp. 450-1.

Carmina vestrarum peragunt praeconia laudum,
neve sit actorum fama caduca, cavent:
Carmina fit viva virtus, expersque sepulcri
notitiam serae posteritatis habet.

³⁴Ovid, *Amores*, I, x, 59-62, translated by Grant Showerman, Loeb ed., pp. 362-3.

³⁵Propertius, *Odes*, Bk. III, i, 33-6, translated by H. E. Butler, Loeb ed., pp. 178-9.

Nec non ille tui casus memorator Homerus
posteritate suum crescere sensit opus.
Meque inter seros laudabit Roma nepotes:
illum post cineres auguror ipse diem.

³⁶Propertius, *ibid.*, 23-4:

At mihi quod vivo detraxit invida turba,
post obitum duplici faenore reddet Honos.

³⁷Propertius, *Odes*, Bk. IV, i, 65-6, translated by Butler, Loeb ed., pp. 266-9; of the relevant passages in lines 55-70 only a couple of lines have been quoted:

Scandentis qui asis cernit de vallibus arces ;
ingenio muros aestimit ille meo !
Roma, fave...

³⁸ Martial, *Epigrams*, X, xxvi, translated by W. C. A. Ker, Loeb ed. (Sidney Lee's citation, on page 186 of his *Life of William Shakespeare*, of "X 27 seq." is in error.)

Sed datur aeterno victur um carmine nomen.

³⁹ Martial, *Epigrams*, VII, lxxxiv, 6-8, *ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 480-1.

Certior in nostro carmine vultus erit ;
casibus hic nullis, nullis debilis annis
vivet, Apelleum cum morietur opus.

⁴⁰ Martial, *Epigrams*, VIII, iii, 3-8, *ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 4-7.

Iam plus nihil addere nobis
fama potest: teritur noster ubique liber
et cum rupta situ Messalae saxa iacebunt
altaque cum Licini marmora pulvis erunt,
me tamen ora legent et secum plurimus hospes
ad patrias sedes carmina nostra feret.

⁴¹ The whole of this unique work is, naturally, and even more centrally than is true of the *Commedia*, an immortalizing tribute to Dante's platonic mistress. The above passage, which follows a prose link stating, "I would say words which should make whoever might hear them weep," is from *The New Life of Dante Alighieri*, translated by C. E. Norton, 1920, p. 87.

⁴² For instance, Sidney Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 186, discussing with reference to Shakespeare's sonnets the classical origins of the eternizing convention, makes no mention of Petrarch; and Lisle John, *The Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences*, 1938, pp. 130-133, who covers with reasonable industry the Elizabethan exploitation of this conceit, follows Lee and makes no attempt to ascertain Italian influence in this area.

⁴³ Sonnet LXXXIII, translated by Joseph Auslander, *The Sonnets of Petrarch*, 1931, p. 83. Succeeding quotations are from this volume, which may be somewhat free and modern as a translation but often achieves poetic excellence.

⁴⁴ CXIV, *ibid.*, p. 114.

⁴⁵ CLIII, *ibid.*, p. 153.

⁴⁶ CLIV, *ibid.*, p. 154.

⁴⁷ CLXX, *ibid.*, p. 170.

⁴⁸ CLXXII, *ibid.*, p. 172.

⁴⁹ CLXXXI, *ibid.*, p. 181. In Sonnet CCX, p. 210, is a borderline passage: "Then shall you murmur how my verses reel.....," etc.

⁵⁰ Sonnet XXI of the series composed after Laura's death (as are all subsequent passages from Petrarch), *ibid.*, p. 249.

⁵¹ XXV, *ibid.*, p. 253. Sonnet XXXVI, p. 264, is similar in theme but powerfully morbid rather than sentimental:

While on my heart the amorous worms conferred
Under Love's flaming fierce authority,
I tracked her wild sweet footsteps constantly
As over desert mountains she demurred;
And much in music bitter as the curd
I dared both Love and her accuse of: we
Were rude in genius then, our rhymes too free,
With novel and unsteady notions stirred.
Dead is that fire; its ashes quite as cold
As one cold little vault that holds them....O,
Had it but ripened, reached its genial glow,
Armed with the strength of song, which I withhold
Even now, my mellower tunes, could I relax,
Had burst stones wide and melted them like wax!

⁵² XXXIX (of the posthumous series), *ibid.*, p. 267. See also Sonnet LXVIII, p. 296.

⁵³ XXIX, *ibid.*, p. 257.

⁵⁴ XL, *ibid.*, p. 268. Similar is Sonnet XLI, p. 269.

⁵⁵ LVI, *ibid.*, p. 284.

⁵⁶ LXXXIX, *ibid.*, p. 317.

⁵⁷ Quoted in p. 107 of H. F. Cary, *The Early French Poets*, 1846.

⁵⁸ Ronsard, Odes, IV, xii.

⁵⁹ Ronsard, Odes, IV, xv, tr, Cary, p. 117; the original quoted by Lee, *The French Renaissance*, p. 278.

Ornez ce livre de lierre,
Ou de myrte, et loin de la terre
Sil vous plaist enlevez ma vois ;
Et faites que tousjours ma lyre
D'âge en âge s'entende bruire
Du More jusques à l'Anglois.

⁶⁰ Quoted by Lee, *ibid.*, p. 278, from Ronsard, "Odes Retranchées," in *Oeuvres*, ii, 443-4.

⁶¹ Quoted by G. Wyndham, *Ronsard et Le Pléiade*, 1906, p. 103; Ronsard, Odes, IV, iv, "De l'Election de son Sepulchre."

⁶² Quoted by Lee in his *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 187, from Ronsard, Odes, I, vii. Ronsard even condescended to employ his "immortalizing" magic upon non-human objects, such as in one of several odes to a favorite fountain (quoted by Wyndham, *op. cit.*, p. 89, "A la Fontaine Bellerie," Ode ix).

⁶³ Quoted by Lee, *The French Renaissance*, p. 278, from Ronsard, I, xciii (also quoted in Lee's *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 189, but with error in the reference, "cxcxiii").

⁶⁴ Ronsard, Amours de Marie, I, xxxvii, quoted by Wyndham, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-143.

⁶⁵ Ronsard, Sonnets pour Helene, II, ii, quoted by Wyndham, *ibid.*, pp. 152-153.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, II, xlii, p. 153; the translation is Wyndham's.

⁶⁷ Quoted by Cary, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

⁶⁸ Quoted by Wyndham, *op. cit.*, p. 74, from sonnet V of "Les Antiquitez de Rome."

⁶⁹ Quoted by Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 277; from du Bellay, *Oeuvres Choisées*, ed. Fouquieres, pp. 162-3.

⁷⁰ Quoted by Lee, *ibid.*, p. 279; du Bellay, *Oeuvres*, "De l'Immortalité des Poètes."

⁷¹ Quoted by Cary, *op. cit.*, p. 58, from du Bellay, *Recueil*, Ode iv, f. 135; Cary translates in prose: "What age shall extinguish the remembrance

of thee, O Boccaccio, and what hard winters, O Petrarch! shall wither the glory of thy green laurels? Who, Dante and Bembo, of proud and lofty spirit, shall see your memory fade?"

⁷² Desportes, *Diverses Amours*, xi, translated by Cary, *ibid.*, p. 143.

J'espere avec le tans que sa belle ramée
Pourra par mes escrits jusqu'aux astres monter,
Et que les Florentins cesseront de vanter
La dedaigneuse Nimphe en laurier transformée.

⁷³ Desportes, *Les Amours de Cleonice*, LXII; quoted by Lee, *The Elizabethan Sonnets*, vol. 1, Intro., p. lviii, in reference to Daniel's *Delia*, XXXIII (*vide infra*). Lee thought the sonnet had an Italian source as yet undiscovered.

⁷⁴ *Tottel's Miscellany*, 1557, ed. H. E. Rollins, vol. 1, 1928; editor's number 159, "Vpon the tomb of A. w.," p. 109.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 113, no. 162, "A funerall song vpon the deceas of Annes his moother."

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 114, no. 163, "Vpon the death of the lord Mautrauers, out of doctor Haddons latine."

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 147, no. 189, "Verses written on the picture of sir James wilford." See also poems on pp. 120, 136, 169, and 218.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 156, no. 199, "A praise of his Ladye."

⁷⁹ By "G. Bucke," p. 33 in Arber's *English Reprints*, *Thomas Watson*, 1895.

⁸⁰ Spenser, *The Shepherd's Calendar*, ed. W. L. Renwick, 1930, p. 160.

⁸¹ Sidney Lee, *A Life of William Shakespeare*, p. 186 (cf. virtually the same sentences in p. 279 of his *The French Renaissance*).

⁸² Quoted by Alden, R. M., *The Sonnets of Shakespeare*, 1916, p. 136; Alden in turn was quoting Tyler, giving views of various commentators on whether Shakespeare's sonnet No. LV was based on this paragraph from Meres rather than directly upon Ovid or upon Golding's translation. The general trend was against his dependence upon Meres.

⁸³ My survey of the appearance of the eternizing convention in sonnets from Sidney to Shakespeare excluded philosophical or religious sequences by Barnes, Lok, Chapman, Constable, Drummond, and Donne. A reading of

Percy's *Coelia*, 1594, Barnfield's *Cynthia*, 1595, Griffin's *Fidessa*, 1595, Tofte's *Laura*, 1597, and of Fulke-Greville's *Caelica* (published, as were Shakespeare's, long after the vogue had waned) disclosed no use whatsoever of the eternizing conceit.

⁸⁴ Ben Jonson, *The Poetaster*, 1602, p. 39.

⁸⁵ XC, p. 56 in vol. 1 of Sidney Lee's edition of *The Elizabethan Sonnets*, from which all succeeding quotations are taken.

⁸⁶ XXVIII, p. 25.

⁸⁷ XXXIV, p. 28.

⁸⁸ XV, p. 18.

⁸⁹ *Delia*, II, *ibid.*, p. 88.

⁹⁰ *Delia*, XXX, *ibid.*, p. 101; cf. intro., p. lvii.

⁹¹ As is considered by Lisle John, *The Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences*, 1938, p. 19. The present paper acknowledges indebtedness also to data on pp. 130-133 of this interesting study.

⁹² *Delia*, XXXVII, in Lee, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 126. Janet Scott, *Les Sonnets Elizabethains*, 1929, p. 314, gives Tasso's *Rime Amoroze*, 58, as a source for this.

⁹³ *Delia*, XXXVIII, in Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

⁹⁴ *Delia*, XXXIX, *ibid.*, p. 127.

⁹⁵ *Delia*, XL, *ibid.*, p. 127. A. H. Upham, *French Influence in English Literature*, 1908, p. 119, suggests the influence of du Bellay's "Antiquitez."

⁹⁶ This is the conjecture by Lisle Johns, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

⁹⁷ *Delia*, L, in Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

⁹⁸ *Delia*, LI, *ibid.*, p. 133.

⁹⁹ *Delia*, LIII, *ibid.*, p. 134; see also Alden, *op. cit.*, in reference to Shakespeare's sonnet XXI.

¹⁰⁰ *Diana*, II, x, in Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

¹⁰¹ *Diana*, VIII, iv, *ibid.*, p. 112.

¹⁰² *Diana*, V, v, *ibid.*, p. 98.

¹⁰³ *Diana*, V, x, *ibid.*, p. 100.

¹⁰⁴ *Tears of Fancie*, XXXIII, *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 151.

¹⁰⁵ *Licia*, XVII, *ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 43. Kastner traces the "sighs" motif to du Bellay's *l'Olive*, XXXII (*Mod. Lang. Rev.*, III (1907), 277).

¹⁰⁶ *Licia*, L, *ibid.*, p. 59.

¹⁰⁷ *Phyllis*, XL, *ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 22. Elsewhere in *Phyllis*, XX, p. 11, Lodge announces the haughty disdain of his "grave muse" for praise of anything less ethereal than the loved one's "modest mien," her "honey-sweeter eloquence," etc., concluding :

And could my style her happy virtues equal,
Time had no power her glories to enthrall.

Janet Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 312, traces this back to Ariosto.

¹⁰⁸ *Parthenophil*, final poem, in Lee, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 316.

¹⁰⁹ *Parthenophil*, Elegy XV, *ibid.*, p. 255-256.

¹¹⁰ *Idea*, VI, *ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 184.

¹¹¹ *Idea*, VIII, *ibid.*, p. 185; Janet Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 317, traces the "old woman" motif back to Propertius and Horace. Cf. for a similar theme Drayton's next sonnet, IX.

¹¹² *Idea*, XIII, *ibid.*, p. 187.

¹¹³ *Idea*, XVI, *ibid.*, p. 189.

¹¹⁴ *Idea*, XVII, *ibid.*, p. 189; Janet Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 317, correlates its general theme with a poem by Sannazaro.

¹¹⁵ *Idea*, XXV, Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

¹¹⁶ *Idea*, XLVII, *ibid.*, p. 204.

¹¹⁷ *Idea*, XLIX, *ibid.*, p. 205.

¹¹⁸ *Idea*, XLIV, *ibid.*, p. 203; its Shakespearean quality is pointed out by Alden, *op. cit.*, p. 457.

¹¹⁹ *Zepheria*, prefatory poem, Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

¹²⁰ *Zepheria*, XIV, *ibid.*, p. 164.

¹²¹ *Zepheria*, XIX, *ibid.*, p. 166.

¹²² *Zepheria*, XXIV, *ibid.*, p. 160.

¹²³ *Amoretti*, XXVII, *ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 230. See also two banal laudatory sonnets on p. 216 prefacing the sequence—both poems dragging in "eternity"!

¹²⁴ *Amoretti*, XXIX, *ibid.*, p. 231.

¹²⁵ *Amoretti*, LXIX, *ibid.*, p. 251.

¹²⁶ *Amoretti*, LXXV, *ibid.*, p. 254.

¹²⁷ Spenser, *Ruines of Time*, 1591, quoted by Lee, *Life of William*

Shakespeare, p. 187.

¹²⁸ *Diella*, XXXVI, Lee, *Elizabethan Sonnets*, vol. 2, p. 319.

¹²⁹ *Chloris*, XLI, *ibid.*, p. 345. Another passage, from XLIII, p. 346, shows the young poet painfully conscious of his deficiencies (XLIV, p. 347, continues in the same vein) :

Let not thy frowns, these labours poor deface !
Although aloft they at the first aspire.
And time shall come, as yet unknown to men,
When I more large thy praises forth shall pen.

¹³⁰ As phrased by Janet Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 247, in course of warning against inflation of Shakespearean debt to the Pléiade.

¹³¹ CVII, in Alden, *op. cit.*, 1916, p. 244. The quotations from this variorum edition follow the original printings (with the v's for u's and *vice versa*, etc.), and may be contrasted with more easily obtained modernized renderings of Shakespeare's sonnets).

¹³² LXXXI, *ibid.*, p. 197.

¹³³ LV, *ibid.*, p. 136; it is in reference to this poem that all of Alden's helpful commentation on the eternizing theme is collected.

¹³⁴ LXV, *ibid.*, p. 163.

¹³⁵ LXIII, *ibid.*, p. 159.

¹³⁶ XIX, *ibid.*, p. 51.

¹³⁷ XVIII, *ibid.*, p. 50.

¹³⁸ LX, *ibid.*, p. 152.

¹³⁹ XV, *ibid.*, p. 44; cf. *Amoretti*, XXIV.

¹⁴⁰ LIV, *ibid.*, p. 133.

¹⁴¹ C, *ibid.*, p. 233.

¹⁴² CI, *ibid.*, p. 235.

¹⁴³ LXXIV, *ibid.*, p. 183.

¹⁴⁴ XXXII, *ibid.*, p. 88.

¹⁴⁵ XVII, *ibid.*, p. 49; cf. *Idea*, XVII.

¹⁴⁶ XXI, *ibid.*, p. 58; cf. *Delia*, LIII.

¹⁴⁷ LXXI, *ibid.*, p. 179.

¹⁴⁸ For instance, Shakespeare's sonnets Nos. LXIV, LXXIII, CXLVI.

¹⁴⁹ For further data on this topic of the vaunt of immortality, reference may be made to Leishman, J.B., *Themes and Variations in Shakespeare's Sonnets*, London, 1961, pp. 27-91; Claes Schaar, *Elizabethan Sonnet Themes and the Dating of Shakespeare's 'Sonnets'*, Lund Studies in English 32, pp. 23-32; H. E. Rollins, ed., *The Sonnets. A New Variorum Edition*, vol. 1, pp. 147 ff., London, 1944.